

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (canceled):

Claim 2 (previously presented): A method of testing a firewall comprising:

transmitting at least one of a session initiation signal to initiate a communications session through said firewall and a session termination signal used to terminate an established communications session;

monitoring to determine from the time of at least one said transmitted signal at least one of a port opening delay which occurs in regard to a session initiation signal and opening a port in said firewall for a communications session that is being initiated, and a port closing delay which occurs in regard to a session termination signal and closing a port in said firewall when terminating an established communications session; and the method further comprising at least one of:

transmitting session initiation signals at an increasing rate through said firewall to cause the opening of ports in said firewall, measuring the effect of said increasing rate of session initiation signals on at least one of an opening and a closing delay time associated with opening a port and closing a port, respectively, in response to transmitted session initiation signals; and

transmitting session termination signals at an increasing rate through said firewall to cause the closing of ports in said firewall, measuring the effect of said

increasing rate of session termination signals on closing delay time associated with closing a port in response to transmitted session termination signals.

Claim 3 (canceled):

Claim 4 (previously presented): A method of testing a firewall comprising:

transmitting at least one of a session initiation signal to initiate a communications session through said firewall and a session termination signal used to terminate an established communications session;

monitoring to determine from the time of at least one said transmitted signal a port closing delay which occurs in regard to a session termination signal and closing a port in said firewall when terminating an established communications session; and the

method further comprising at least one of:

transmitting session initiation signals at an increasing rate through said firewall to cause the opening of ports in said firewall, measuring the effect of said increasing rate of session initiation signals on opening delay time associated with opening a port in response to said session initiation signals; and

transmitting session termination signals at an increasing rate through said firewall to cause the closing of ports in said firewall measuring the effect of said increasing rate of session termination signals on closing delay time associated with closing a port in response to said session termination signals.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 4, further

comprising:

determining an average closing delay for each of a plurality of different session signaling rates.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 5, further comprising:

generating a visual display of a graph illustrating the average closing delay for a plurality of different session signaling rates.

Claims 7-9 (canceled):

Claim 10 (previously presented): A method of testing a network firewall comprising:

transmitting a session signal to terminate an ongoing communications session being conducted through at least one port of said firewall;

measuring a port closing delay time associated with the closing of said at least one port following the transmission of said signal to terminate said communications session;

repeating said initiating transmitting and measuring steps while increasing a rate of session signals sent to said firewall to load said firewall; and

monitoring changes in port closing delay times in response to said increasing rate of session signals to determine effect of increasing levels of session signaling on closing delay times.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 10, further comprising:

determining the level of session signaling that causes a closing delay time which exceeds a preselected maximum

closing delay time.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 10, further comprising:

determining the amount of firewall processing power required for a particular application based on an expected traffic load and said monitored information indicating the effect of session signaling of different loads on said closing delay.

Claims 13-17 (canceled):

Claim 18 (previously presented): A method of testing a network firewall, comprising:

transmitting a session signal to initiate a communications session to be conducted through said firewall;

transmitting test signals to at least one port on a first side of said firewall;

determining a time when said test signals first pass through said at least one port, said at least one port being opened in response to said signal to initiate a communications session;

determining a port opening delay which occurs in regard to opening a port in said firewall for said communications session from said determined time;

transmitting session signals at an increasing rate through said firewall to cause at least one of the opening and closing of ports in said firewall; and

measuring the effect of said increasing rate of session signals on at least one of an opening and closing delay time associated with opening and closing ports, respectively, in response to said session signals.

Claim 19 (original): The method of claim 18, wherein said session signals are at least one of SIP and H.323 compliant signals.

Claims 20-21 (canceled):

Claim 22 (previously presented): A firewall test apparatus, comprising:

- a session signaling module for generating session signals used to initiate a communications session to be conducted through a firewall to be tested and to terminate a communications session after it has been initiated, and means for flooding said firewall with increasing amounts of session signal traffic used to initiate and terminate communications sessions;

- a scanning probe generation module for generating probe signals to be directed at firewall ports;

- a timing synchronization module for synchronizing operation of said firewall test apparatus to at least one of an external clock source and another firewall test apparatus; and

- an analysis module for determining at least a port closing delay from a session signal time and a time probe signals are detected to stop passing through a port in said firewall corresponding to an initiated communications session, and for determining at least a port opening delay from a session signal time associated with a session signal used to initiate a communications session and a time probe signals are detected to start passing through a port in said firewall corresponding to the initiated communications session.

Claim 23 (original): The firewall test apparatus of claim 22, wherein said analysis module includes:

means for determining the effect of increasing amount of session signaling flooding said firewall on the closing delays associated with terminating existing communications sessions.

Claim 24 (original): The firewall test apparatus of claim 23, further comprising:

an output device for outputting a report showing the effect of flooding said firewall with increasing amounts of session signals on the closing delays associated with terminating existing communications sessions.

Claims 25-27 (canceled):

Claim 28 (previously presented): A firewall test system for testing a firewall, comprising;

a test signal generator for generating communications session initiation signals and probe signals directed at a first side of said firewall, including means for establishing a communications session through said firewall using session initiation signals prior to transmitting at least some of said probe signals, means for synchronizing test signal generation to an outside clock source, and means for flooding said firewall with session signals which trigger the opening or the closing of ports in said firewall; and

a test signal analyzer for detecting probe signals passing through said first side of said firewall to said second side of said firewall and for determining port closing delays as measured from the time the test signal analyzer

detects a signal used to close a port in said firewall and said analyzer ceases to detect test signals passing through said firewall, and means for synchronizing device operation with said outside clock source.

Claim 29 (original): The firewall test system of claim 28, wherein said test analyzer further includes:

means for measuring the effect of increasing the rate of session signals on port closing times following the termination of a communications session.

Claims 30-32 (canceled):